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Introduction

In the recent past, different concepts of space have been adapted from neighboring academic disciplines (such as geography and social and political sciences) and applied to linguistic research. Major outcomes – both with respect to theoretical/methodological achievements and their application to empirical data – are collected in the two volumes *Language and Space* (cf. Auer and Schmidt 2010; Lameli, Kehrein, and Rabanus 2010), providing a broad, general overview of the different perspectives on language and space. This book discusses dialectological, sociolinguistic and folk dialectological concepts of linguistic space. The articles present findings mainly from empirical studies which take on these different concepts and examine how they relate to one another. The major goal of this collection is to shed light on the interrelationship between the above-mentioned aspects and their relevance to variational linguistics.

In dialectology, the concept of space has always been a central issue. Due to many traditional atlas projects, the linguistic variation in space has been very well documented. In these projects the main focus was on the traditional base dialects of rural areas. Urban centers were considered non-homogeneous language areas and thus were not included in the studies in most cases. It was also common in the traditional dialectological atlases to examine only one speaker per place as representative of the dialect. Very often the informants were non-mobile, older, rural and male[1] (NORM; cf. Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 29) – the oldest inhabitants of the villages. The validity of the results of this kind of traditional research is somewhat restricted, however, when it comes to describing the linguistic reality, since the data only represents the speech of a certain speaker group in a special communicative context. In traditional dialect geography, questionnaire-based methods were usually applied to elicit the dialect knowledge of the speakers. This knowledge is not necessarily identical with the informants' actual language use. In order to get a more diversified picture of the spectrum of varieties, it is necessary to collect spontaneous speech data in different social contexts

[1] Traditional German dialect atlases typically included both male and female informants.

with several speakers per place to compare with traditional knowledge-based data. In this way, social determinants of language use and variation can be investigated. In the course of the advent of sociolinguistics in the 1960s, factors such as the age, sex, and education of the (dialect) speakers as well as the social milieu and communicative requirements in different social contexts came to the fore (cf. Mattheier 1980, 1994; Sieburg 1991). Accordingly, studies focused on the investigation of different groups of speakers and the particularly varied language in the city.

For a long time traditional research in the field of dialectology and the new socio-dialectological research directions coexisted separately (cf. Britain 2010). Traditional dialectology focused primarily on the diatopic (and occasionally diachronic) dimension of linguistic variation, whereas in sociolinguistics the diastratic and diaphasic dimensions played a main role. Apart from projects such as the *Mittelrheinischer Sprachatlas* ('Linguistic Atlas of the Middle Rhine') (cf. Bellmann, Herrgen, and Schmidt 1994–2002), most sociolinguistic studies were limited to the investigation of single towns or villages (cf. Besch et al. 1981; Lenz 2003) or the variation within a city (cf. Kallmeyer 1994; Dittmar, Schlobinski, and Wachs 1986). Their results suggest that the idea of a homogeneous local speech community, as assumed in traditional dialectology, is not consistent with reality. Contact with the standard language or adjacent regional varieties, facilitated by the growing influence of the media and increased mobility, respectively, led to the majority of speakers possessing several linguistic registers and being able to use them in a context-specific way.

The numerous studies that were conducted according to these two paradigms – socio-dialectological research and traditional dialectology – have provided important insights into the social stratification of language use and the geographical distribution of dialects, respectively. However, there is little knowledge about their relationship and possible mutual influences. Comprehensive areal studies incorporating the social dimension of language use are still rare. What is needed is research including two-dimensional designs (linguistic geography and the comparison of conservative and modern speaker groups) which allows researchers to make systematic statements about dialect variation and change by taking possible social factors into account.

In recent years, a further aspect has gained importance: the representation and evaluation of dialects by the speakers themselves, i.e. by linguistic laypeople. One basic assumption of this subdiscipline of sociolinguistics, often referred to as "perceptual dialectology" or "folk dialectology" (cf. Anders, Hundt, and Lasch 2010; Long and Preston 2002; Niedzielski and Preston 2003; Preston 1999), is the idea that subjective classifications and attitudes of

speakers can be a major motivation for variation in language use (cf. Macha and Weger 1983: 265) and therefore cause language change.

Like "objective" (socio)linguistics, perceptual dialectology deals with the examination and classification of linguistic variants, but from a lay perspective. Everyday experience and evidence from the literature show different evaluations of dialects with regard to their social attractiveness, e.g. Upper Saxon being regarded as the most unpleasant dialect in the German-speaking area (cf. Anders 2010) in contrast to Northern German or Bavarian, which are rated the most pleasant dialects (cf. Eichinger et al. 2009). Another frequently pursued issue is the perception of linguistic features. Which features are salient to linguistic laypeople? Which features do they notice, and which do they talk about when asked to describe a certain dialect (cf. Preston 2010)? Which features are associated with certain varieties or groups of speakers, and do these associations correspond to "objective" linguistic findings?

In addition to evaluations regarding the social attractiveness of dialects and the analysis of the salience of certain dialect features, a central research topic is how linguistic laypeople perceive and structure dialect areas (cf. Auer 2004; Preston 1993). As a methodological tool for the analysis of subjective notions about dialect geography, so-called *mental maps* have proven to be helpful. These are maps drawn by the informants which indicate the scope or the borders of a dialect area. The comparison of subjective and objective dialect boundaries enables researchers to identify linguistic and non-linguistic factors which could be reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of neighboring speaker groups, and thus provide indications for the driving forces behind language change.

Not only the methods of data collection and the research topics have changed, but also the computational possibilities of processing large corpora of linguistic data and the visualizations of results have been refined. Methods from mathematics, statistics and geography have been adapted and applied to linguistic data sets (cf. Köhler, Altmann, and Piotrowski 2005). Various methods for the cartographic representation of "objective" and "subjective" linguistic data have been developed, especially in the field of language mapping. The volume *Language Mapping* (Lameli, Kehrein, and Rabanus 2010) provides an overview of the traditions of linguistic cartography, current developments and recent applications of quantitative visualization techniques.

The aspects described above are discussed in this volume from different perspectives. The first part of the volume deals mainly with dialectological questions from a sociolinguistic point of view: Quantitative and qualitative analyses are presented which are based on variational linguistic methods and

questions from sociolinguistic research on dialect change (papers by Britain; Elmentaler; Hansen). Another major part consists of the analysis of folk dialectological concepts of space. Methods of data elicitation concerning lay concepts of dialectological space are discussed as well as the relevance of the outcomes of these kinds of studies for variational linguistics (papers by Torgersen; Möller; Vaattovaara; Stoeckle; Montgomery).

The second part of the volume focuses on dialectometric and quantitative methods (papers by Schwarz; Pickl and Rumpf; Szmrecsanyi; Streck; Heeringa and Hinskens). In the research described in the papers in this part of the volume, the center of interest is to analyse and visualize spatial linguistic structures on the basis of aggregated data sets, using a large number of phenomena.

Starting the volume, David Britain presents a critical view of the urbanist agenda in variationist sociolinguistics. He questions the widely accepted dichotomy between urban and rural spaces that have been strongly separated in linguistic research during the past decades. The reason for this is that cities were believed to imply a much higher degree of linguistic "disorder" than is found in the countryside, a factor that led to the practice of carrying out variationist research mainly in urban settings and rarely in rural areas. Britain argues that the urban-rural dichotomy is not a productive one for explaining the root causes of linguistic change, and that there are and can be no linguistic processes that are restricted either to urban areas or to rural. The paper considers the views of human, social and economic geographers who have cautioned against the usefulness of the terms 'rural' and 'urban' because, they argue, there exist no causal social processes unique to either. It then presents evidence of the uninevitability of urbanisation, using evidence from and discussing the linguistic consequences of over half a century of net *counter*-urbanisation in Northern Europe and North America. Finally it argues that the causal process that helps us best understand the linguistic outcomes not just of urbanisation, but also of other demographic trends such as counter-urbanisation is *language and dialect contact.* Using examples from a number of urban and rural speech communities around the world, it is demonstrated that while contact may well be most obviously and vividly observed and experienced in cities, it is essentially insensitive to urban or rural locale and is not confined sociologically, demographically or epistemologically to an urban context.

Michael Elmentaler argues that modern areal linguistics should pay attention to the whole spectrum of speech varieties between local dialect and spoken regional standard language, aiming to describe their variational patterns. Elmentaler describes the concepts of space in traditional dialectology

and the potentials of modern research on regional varieties. Problems of constructing spatial structures in "new dialectology" are pointed out. The author discusses some of the factors to be considered if sociolinguistic aspects are to be included in areal linguistics; he also points out the potentials of a dialectology which studies speech variation on the basis of records of spontaneous conversation in an areal perspective. In the second part of his paper, Elmentaler presents the results of a perceptual experiment in which the informants had to evaluate a phonological feature (spirantization of final *g*) in three regions of Northern Germany. The results suggest that spatial structures depend on feature selections, the degree of abstraction in the description, and the situational context.

Sandra Hansen describes the influences of sociolinguistic parameters on dialect knowledge and the occurrence of hyperdialectal forms in utterances of speakers from Southwest Germany. On the basis of socially differentiated data, measurement techniques are developed to calculate indices of dialect knowledge and indices on hyperdialectality for each speaker. Traditional data from the *Linguistic Atlas of Southwest Germany* (*Südwestdeutscher Sprachatlas*, Steger et al. 1989ff.) serve as a basis of comparison. In a further step, the influences of extra-linguistic factors on the calculated indices are tested by using statistical models. Finally, the relationship between dialect knowledge and hyperdialectality is discussed.

Eivind Torgerson presents perceptual data from London and Birmingham. He used perceptual tests to investigate the uniformity of Multicultural London English (MLE) in relation to ethnicity and geographical location of speakers, as measured by London and Birmingham listeners' ability to classify ethnicity and location based on short speech samples. The MLE features shared by most speakers in inner-city London were corroborated by small or no differences in the ethnic classification of inner-city speakers by London listeners. He has also tested listeners from Birmingham to examine to what degree MLE is also regionally neutral, i.e. if the multicultural varieties are non-regional. The results of the study show that multi-ethnic features seem to be more important than geographical factors, and that multi-ethnicity seems to be mostly associated with larger cities.

Robert Möller's paper deals with the relationship between mental borders and area formation in vernacular variation. The author discusses the elicitation methods of lay descriptions concerning local language use. He argues on the basis of a direct questioning according to the *Atlas of German Everyday Language* (*Atlas zur deutschen Alltagssprache*, Elspaß and Möller 2003ff.) that areal formation shows a striking resemblence with non-linguistic borders. This also holds for new patterns of areal distribution (new phenomena or

areas that diverge from the dialectal ones). Even if one admits that political and administrative boundaries can still hinder language contact nowadays, it is remarkable that historical boundaries still continue to play a role for everyday speech even today. The data gathered in the sixth round of the *AdA* survey focuses on the informants' localization of their own everyday speech in their folk linguistic mental map. It turns out that the areas of linguistic identification tend to have a double background inasmuch as informants refer to historical territories (and their prestigious names), yet at the same time these areas also form parts or subunits of recent political and administrative units.

Johanna Vaattovaara analyzes the meaning of linguistic features that serve as collective landmarks and labels of identity. She combines qualitative findings with methods from folk linguistics. As a linguistic laboratory she chose the Tornio Valley region in the north-western part of Finland close to the Swedish border. Her paper deals with the ideological motivation behind the preservation of the *h* in non-initial syllables, an archaic phonological dialect feature in the Tornio Valley dialect of Finnish (e.g. *saunhaan~sauhnaan*; Standard Finnish and the majority of current dialects use the form *saunØaan* 'into sauna'). The *h* serves as an index and a source of the transnational imagined community, constructed and shaped by the political history of the border and the general image of the area. Some of the central findings of a more extensive study and methodological implications are discussed in the framework of "map free" interpretation of space, currently dominant in cultural geography.

Philipp Stoeckle presents findings from his work on the perception of regional dialect variation in the Alemannic speech area. The central question is: Which linguistic and extra-linguistic factors are important for the perception and structuration of dialect areas and dialect borders? For this purpose, a small sample of data from four locations was selected for a detailed analysis. First Stoeckle examines how the informants structure their own local dialect and the surrounding dialect areas geographically. In the next step, possible reasons for these subjective structurations are discussed; for this purpose, he takes a closer look at the speakers' comments referring to both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors in the interviews. It turns out that folk strategies of structuring dialect regions include not only knowledge about linguistic features, but also – and probably more importantly – historical, political and cultural factors. This may support the observation that mental linguistic borders often coincide with administrative, confessional and political borders rather than with classifications based on findings of linguistic atlases. (For similar observations cf. Möller in this volume.)

In his methodologically oriented paper Chris Montgomery discusses different ways of digitally quantifying data from "draw-a-map" tasks, using examples from his study on the perception of Northern English dialects (2006). A tracing method is demonstrated, along with older computerized methods for producing composite maps. The author contrasts the older methods with new ways of generating composite maps using the Geographical Information System ArcGIS. He discusses a number of outputs and their potential for explaining patterns in perceptual data. Various maps including additional data, such as road networks, population density and dialect areas, clearly show the advantages of the new system.

Christian Schwarz presents a method of distinguishing phonologically conservative and innovative dialect areas in Southwest Germany on the basis of a large corpus of spontaneous speech data. In the first part of his contribution he describes the necessary methodological steps in data processing, resulting in a data set that can be used as input for statistical analysis and visualisation of variation in space as interpolated grid plots. In the second part results are discussed. The major outcome consists of an aggregate interpolation plot that includes variables from sixteen different etymological sound classes that can be used for demonstrating the distribution of receding phonological variables in space. The interpolation shows two conservative areas where receding forms are still widely spread. They lie within the centres of the two major dialect groups of Southwest Germany: Alemannic and Swabian. The conservative areas are separated by a broad band of intense variation between receding and innovative variants. Schwarz argues that this variation is not due to a unidirectional horizontal spread of the dominant dialect into the area of the other. Variation is rather triggered by vertical standard influence that supports any dialect form to spread out horizontally as long as it is phonologically identical or similar to the standard form.

The last four texts deal with dialectometrical and related quantitative methods for a cartographic representation of language in geographical space and/or for the analysis of the relationship between language and space. All four articles were written by authors who worked with (different kinds of) aggregated data and whose methods/techniques – at least to some extent – are based on ideas of the "Salzburg School" (see the works of Hans Goebl cited below) and/or the "Groningen School" (see the works of John Nerbonne mentioned in the following). A detailed description of the history of dialectometry from Jean Séguy (see e.g. Séguy 1973) and Hans Goebl (see e.g. Goebl 1982) to John Nerbonne and others (see e.g. Nerbonne 2006, 2009; Heeringa 2004) is given in Goebl (2005, 2010) and Nerbonne (2010). Brief descriptions of the particular subfield of dialectometry as well as the authors'

own theoretical/methodical contributions are presented in the individual articles.

Simon Pickl and Jonas Rumpf sum up the development and motivation of concepts of space in classical dialectometry and argue for a variant-based dialectometry, a "bottom-up" view of language in space. They discuss methods and types of maps which are the result of a joint research project at the Universities of Augsburg and Ulm. Methods from stochastic image analysis were applied to data from the *Sprachatlas von Bayerisch-Schwaben* (König 1996–2009). One of the aims of the approach is to get a closer look at the spatial distributions of single linguistic features in the dialects in the region of Bayerisch-Schwaben and to find out what may have caused these distributions. The method also may reveal as yet unknown associations between linguistic variables, while at the same time demonstrating the feasibility and the potential of an alternative quantitative approach to linguistic variation in space.

Benedikt Szmrecsanyi examines morphosyntactic variability in traditional British English dialects, using naturalistic corpus data from the *Freiburg English Dialect Corpus* (FRED). With the aid of dialectometrical and statistical methods Szmrecsanyi explores how and to what extent morphosyntactic variability is structured geographically. The study utilizes an aggregate measure of morphosyntactic dialect distances that is empirically based on the text frequencies of 57 morphological and syntactic features. With as-the-crow-flies distance, least-cost travel time, a linguistic gravity index, and dialect area membership, four language-external predictor variables are introduced. They are all tested for explanatory potency in regard to morphosyntactic dialect distances. The results of Szmrecsanyi's analyses suggest that mere geography (in terms of as-the-crow-flies distance and least-cost travel time) is a comparatively poor predictor of morphosyntactic variability in British English dialects.

Tobias Streck applies a dialectometrical analysis to a large corpus of spontaneous speech data from traditional speakers of the Alemannic dialects in southwest Germany. He demonstrates two kinds of cluster maps concerning the phonology of the traditional dialects in the 1970s/80s and discusses the areal distribution of the dialect groups. The visual interpretation of the maps suggests that the most important dialect boundary in southwest Germany (according to the dataset) runs along the former political border between the territories of Baden and Württemberg. Streck describes, among other things, a spread of the Swabian dialect into the region north-east of Lake Constance and argues that the former political structure of the area is a mental factor which strongly influences dialect geography. He therefore concludes that men-

tal concepts of space that are partly based on former political-administrative territories affect linguistic behavior (cf. also Möller's and Stoeckle's papers).

Wilbert Heeringa and Frans Hinskens study the development of koines ('regiolects') and other intermediate varieties outside of traditional local dialects, using phonetic transcriptions of newly collected dialect recordings of representative Dutch dialects from 20 locations in the Netherlands and the northern part of Belgium which were collected in 2007–2008. For each site, an older male and a younger female speaker were recorded, representing conservative and innovative speakers, respectively. They measure dialect change at the levels of the lexicon, morphology and the sound components. Changes in the sound components have been measured with Levenshtein distance. The authors found that the distances among dialects have significantly decreased at the level of the sound components, and that the 20 dialects have significantly converged towards standard Dutch. Dialects which were distant to standard Dutch converge more strongly to standard Dutch than dialects which were more closely related to standard Dutch. Considering dialect change, they found that the lexical level is affected most strongly.

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